

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

first storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first setting means;

each of the personal computers comprising:

second storage means for storing image data;

second setting means for setting exclusion of access by another personal computer to the public folder set in the image forming apparatus;

transmission means for transmitting to said another personal computer via the network access exclusion setting information for excluding access to said at least one public folder set by the second setting means;

reception means for receiving via the network permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which is returned from said another personal computer in response to said access exclusion setting information transmitted by the transmission means; and

control means for executing a control, in the presence of new image data for in at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which has been received by the reception means, to read the new image data from the public folder and store it in the second storage means, and delete the new image data from the public folder.

2. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said storage means is a hard disk drive.

3. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the public folder set in the storage means can be accessed by any one of said plurality of personal computers via the network.

4. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the public folder set in the storage means stores image data, which is scanned by the scanner function when the public folder is designated by the operation of the image forming apparatus.

5. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said second setting means, said transmission means, said reception means and said control means are operated according to an application program prestored in the personal computer.

6. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein the image forming apparatus, for which the setting by the second setting means is performed, is designated with use of an IP address.

7. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said permission/non-permission information is information for rejecting access by another personal computer to the public folder, the access to which by said another personal computer is excluded by the present personal computer, and for permitting access by said another personal computer to the public folder, the access to which by said another personal computer is not excluded by the present personal computer.

8. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means invalidates the setting of access to a public folder, the access to which is not permitted by the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting returned from any one of the other personal computers.

9. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls reading and deletion of image data stored in at least one of said public folders, the access to which has been permitted in the access exclusion setting.

10. (Original) An image input system according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls reading and deletion of image data stored in at least one of said public folders, the access to which has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, and also controls, when there is associated setting data, execution of a function based on the associated setting data.

11. (Currently amended) An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

first storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first setting means;

each of the personal computers comprising:

second storage means for storing access exclusion setting information which excludes access by another personal computer to the public folder set at the time of activation, and image data stored in at least one public folder of the image forming apparatus;

reception means for receiving via the network access exclusion setting information, which is sent from another personal computer;

preparation means for comparing the access exclusion setting information received by the reception means with the access exclusion setting information stored in the second storage means, and preparing permission/non-permission information that rejects access to a public folder on which the exclusion of access has been set, and that permits access to a public folder on which the exclusion of access is not set; and

returning means for returning the permission/non-permission information prepared by the preparation means to the personal computer, via the network from which the access exclusion setting information was received by the reception means and

control means for executing a control, in the presence of new image data in at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission / non-permission information on the access exclusion setting stored in the second storage means, to read the new image data from the public folder and store it in the second storage means, and delete the new image data from the public folder.

12. (Currently amended) An image input system in which a plurality of image forming apparatuses, each having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function and forming an image, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to a network,

each of the image forming apparatuses comprising:

first setting means for setting a public folder made public on the network; and

first storage means for setting therein at least one public folder through the setting by the first setting means;

each of the personal computers comprising:

second storage means for storing access exclusion setting information which excludes access by another personal computer to the public folder set in the image forming apparatus, and image data stored in at least one public folder of the image forming apparatus;

transmission means for transmitting the access exclusion setting information stored in the second storage means to another personal computer via the network at the time of activation;

reception means for receiving via the network permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting returned to said another personal computer in response to the access exclusion setting information transmitted by the transmission means; and

control means for ~~updating the access exclusion setting information stored in the second storage means and~~ executing a control, in the presence of new image data for in at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which has been received by the reception means, to read the new image data from the public folder and store it in the second storage means, and delete the new image data from the public folder.

13. (Currently amended) An image input system in which a plurality of input apparatuses, each having a storage device for setting a public folder to be made public on a network and each inputting information such as image data, and a plurality of personal computers are connected to the network, each of the personal computers of the image input system comprising:

storage means for storing image data;

setting means for setting exclusion of access by another personal computer to the public folder set in the storage device of the input apparatus;

transmission means for transmitting to said another personal computer via the network access exclusion setting information for excluding access to said at least one public folder set by the setting means;

reception means for receiving via the network permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which is returned from said another personal computer in response to said access exclusion setting information transmitted by the transmission means; and

control means for executing a control, in the presence of new image data for in at least one public folder, on which access has been permitted in the access exclusion setting, on the basis of the permission/non-permission information on the access exclusion setting, which has been received by the reception means, to read the new image data from the public folder and store it in the storage means, and delete the new image data from the public folder.

14. (New) A computer system for managing images from an image forming apparatus having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function connected via a network, the computer system comprising:

a network interface that provides communication between the computer system and the network;

a processor;

a memory coupled to the processor, the memory comprising a plurality of instructions executed by the processor, the plurality of instructions configured to:

designate a list of one or more public folders to access on the image forming apparatus;

transmit data identifying the designated list of one or more public folders to one or more other computer systems coupled to the network;

receive data from at least one of the one or more other computer systems identifying one or more public folders to be excluded from access; and

remove the one or more public folders to be excluded from access from the designated list of one or more public folders to access.

15. (New) A computer system according to claim 14, wherein the memory further comprises instructions configured to:

read new image data stored in a public folder of the image forming apparatus that corresponds to any one of the designated list of one or more public folder to access;

store the read image data in a storage area of the computer system; and

cause the new image data stored in the public folder of the image forming apparatus to be deleted from the public folder of the image forming apparatus.

16. (New) A computer system according to claim 14, wherein the memory further comprises instructions configured to:

receive a list of public folders to access from another computer system;

identify public folders in the received list of public folders that correspond to any of the designated list of public folders to access; and

transmit data to the another computer system indicating that the another computer system is excluded from accessing the identified public folders.

17. (New) A method for managing images from an image forming apparatus having a scanner function, a printer function and a network function connected via a network to at least two computer systems, the method comprising:

designating a list of one or more public folders to access on the image forming apparatus;

transmitting data identifying the designated list of one or more public folders to one or more computer systems coupled to the network;

receiving data from at least one of the one or more computer systems identifying one or more public folders to be excluded from access; and

removing the one or more public folders to be excluded from access from the designated list of one or more public folders to access.

18. (New) A method according to claim 17, further comprising:

reading new image data stored in a public folder of the image forming apparatus that corresponds to any one of the designated list of one or more public folder to access;

storing the read image data in a storage area of the computer system; and

causing the new image data stored in the public folder of the image forming apparatus to be deleted from the public folder of the image forming apparatus.

19. (New) A method according to claim 17, further comprising:
receiving a list of public folders to access from a computer system;
identifying public folders in the received list of public folders that correspond to any of the designated list of public folders to access; and
transmitting data to the computer system indicating that the computer system is excluded from accessing the identified public folders.